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BABYLON



APPROVED
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COMICS
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BASED ON THE
GROUND-BREAKING
WARNER BROS.
TELEVISION SERIES

*It was
the dawn
of the
third age
of mankind...*

STRACZYNSKI
NETZER
LEIGH

DIRECT SALES



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61941 20387
A



SOME PEOPLE TALK ABOUT HELL.

ALPHA SEVEN IS
ALPHA LEADER, PICKING
UP ENEMY TRANS-
MISSIONS!

THERE'S
NOTHING ON-SCREEN,
ALPHA SEVEN. STAY IN
FORMATION!


I'VE BEEN THERE.

HOLD
THE LINE. NO
ONE GETS THROUGH,
NO MATTER
WHAT!

THE BATTLE OF THE LINE. EARTH'S
FINAL STAND AGAINST THE MINSARI.
WE COULDN'T EVEN TOUCH THEM.

ALPHA LEADER!
I'M HIT!!

THE SKY WAS FULL OF STARS.
EVERY STAR AN EXPLODING SHIP.
AND EACH SHIP... ONE OF OURS.




SOME PEOPLE TALK
ABOUT DEATH.

OH MY GOD!
A MINBARI WAR
CRUISER!


CAME OUTTA
NOWHERE—IT'S A
TRAP!

I'VE SEEN ITS SHAPE, ITS FORM,
ITS LINES. ELEGANT AND TERRIBLE.



HEARD ITS VOICE SCREAM-
ING IN MY EARS AS MY
SQUADRON DIED AROUND ME.

MITCHELL—
BREAK OFF!
BREAK—
ZZZZTT!!



FELT ITS TOUCH GRAZE
THE SKIN OF MY SHIP.

WARNING: AFT STABILIZERS HIT. WEAP-
ONS SYSTEMS AT ZERO. DEFENSIVE GRID
AT ZERO...

POWER PLANT NEARING
CRITICAL MASS...

IF I'M DYING,
I'M TAKING YOU
DEMONS WITH ME!

TARGET LEAD
MINBARI CRUISER!
SET FOR FULL
VELOCITY
RAM!

CHALLENGED IT.

COLLISION ALERT

COLLISION ALERT

COLLISION ALERT

AND WAS SWALLOWED
BY IT, AS THE WHALE
SWALLOWED JONAH.

MY NAME IS *JEFFREY DAVID SINCLAIR*.
RANK: *COMMANDER*.
EARTHFORCE.



ONE OF TWO HUNDRED
SURVIVORS OF THE
BATTLE OF THE
LINE. TWELVE YEARS
AGO.



TWO HUNDRED SURVIVORS.
OUT OF TWENTY *THOU-*
SAND SHIPS. TWENTY
THOUSAND PILOTS. TWENTY
THOUSAND *VOICES*...
CRYING OUT IN THE NIGHT.



SOME PEOPLE TALK ABOUT *HELL*.

I'VE *BEEEN* THERE.

HELL IS NEVER WHAT
YOU *EXPECT*.

In Darkness Find Me

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based on the television series *Babylon 5*
created by J. Michael Straczynski

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COMMANDER SINCLAIR,
ON BEHALF OF THE MINBARI
RELIGIOUS CASTE, I AM SENT TO
TELL YOU THAT THE GREY COUNCIL
WILL RECEIVE YOU IN THIRTY
OF YOUR MINUTES. PLEASE
PREPARE YOURSELF.

THANK
YOU.



PREPARE MYSELF,
AS IF I'VE DONE ANY-
THING *ELSE* SINCE
LEAVING BABYLON 5...

...JUST A FEW DAYS AGO.

EARTHDOME, GENEVA.
JANUARY 6, 2259.

"DAMN IT, SENATOR, I
DEMAND TO KNOW WHY
I'VE BEEN RECALLED HERE."



COMMANDER
SINCLAIR, I AS-
SURE YOU, THIS
WILL ALL BE GONE
INTO AT THE
PROPER TIME.


AND WHEN
IS THAT?
I'VE BEEN COOLING
MY HEELS HERE
FOR TWO
DAYS.



I'VE GOT A WOUNDED
SECURITY CHIEF BACK ON
BABYLON 5, AND WITH RECENT
EVENTS, BABYLON 5'S ROLE AS
PEACEKEEPER IS MORE
IMPORTANT THAN EVER.


MY
REPORT
ON THE
PRESIDENT'S
ASSASSI-
NATION—

I'VE
READ
YOUR REPORT,
COMMANDER,
AND I WISH
YOU'D STOP
CALLING IT AN
"ASSASSI-
NATION."




OUR FIELD
REPORTS SAY IT WAS
AN ACCIDENT WITH
THE SHIP'S FUSION REACTOR.
WERE YOU THERE? NO!
AND I WON'T HAVE
YOU STARTING
RUMORS.


WE'VE HAD A
TERRIBLE SHOCK.
OUR NEW PRESIDENT
NEEDS EVERYONE'S
SUPPORT. WE'RE ALL
A LITTLE PRE-
OCCUPIED
RIGHT
NOW.




THEN WHY
WAS I RECALLED FROM
BABYLON 5 NOW?




I DON'T
KNOW. I
JUST FOLLOW
ORDERS.



WHOSE
ORDERS, SENATOR?
WHOSE?



WHY WON'T
ANYONE GIVE ME
A STRAIGHT AN-
SWER AROUND
HERE?



STUPID QUESTION.
THIS IS THE GOV-
ERNMENT. THIS IS
EARTHDOME.

NO ONE
EVER
GETS A
STRAIGHT
ANSWER.



"THE VICE — THAT IS,
PRESIDENT CLARK."



I DON'T
MIND THE
LATE CALL,
EVEN THOUGH
IT'S UNUSUAL.

I DON'T SLEEP MUCH
AT NIGHT. DON'T SLEEP
WELL WHEN I DO.



SOMETIMES I
HAVE DREAMS...

... FLASHBACKS.



AND SOMETIMES...



...I JUST
HAVE A
REAL
BAD
FEELING
ABOUT
THINGS.



MM-HUMMM...

AT EASE,
COMMANDER.

THANK YOU,
MR. PRESIDENT.



I TRUST
THAT...EXCUSE
ME, COMMANDER,
BUT IS THAT AS
MUCH AT EASE
AS YOU GET?

YES,
SIR.

I SEE.
WELL, IT
FITS YOUR PRO-
FILE, HERE IN
FRONT OF
ME.



CAREER OFFICER, SOLDIER,
FIGHTER PILOT, AND DIPLOMAT.
I DARE SAY YOU'VE DONE BETTER
AS DIPLOMAT THAN YOU
HAVE AS THE REST.

SIR?
I STILL
DON'T—



I KNOW, SINCLAIR.
IT'S LATE AND YOU'RE
WONDERING WHY I'VE
SUMMONED YOU.

TURN
AROUND,
COMMANDER,
THERE'S SOME-
ONE I THINK
YOU SHOULD
MEET.



THIS IS RATHENN... OF THE
WINBARI GREY COUNCIL.

HELLO, COMMANDER.
I BELIEVE YOU REMEM-
BER ME. THOUGH
NOT ENTIRELY.



WE'VE MET
BEFORE...

" AFTER THE BATTLE OF THE LINE."



WHAT...WHAT
DO YOU —

—WANT?

WHY, WE
WANT YOU,
OF COURSE

WE'RE
GOING TO TAKE
YOU TO YOUR
HOME.



I DON'T KNOW
WHAT YOU'RE TALKING
ABOUT I WAS ~~ON~~
ON MARS COLONY

WE'RE
NOT TALKING
ABOUT YOUR
BODY,
SINCLAIR—



—WE'RE TALKING
ABOUT YOUR *SOUL*.

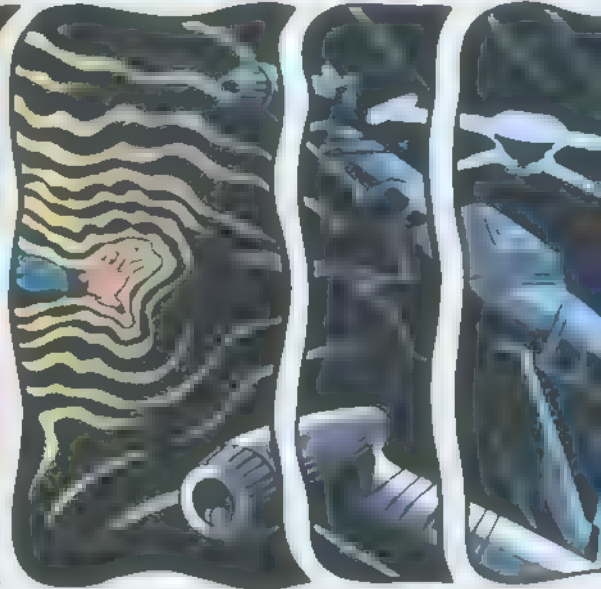
AFTER YOU
TRIED TO RAM
OUR CRUISER, YOU
WERE TAKEN ABOARD
WE KNOW YOU RE-
MEMBER A LITTLE
OF WHAT HAPPENED,
ELEVEN YEARS
AGO



THIS WILL HELP
YOU REMEMBER THE REST



IT'S TIME,
COMMANDER. TIME
FOR YOU TO REMEM-
BER IT ALL.



DEMONS WITH ME.

MY SHIP. CAPTURED.

DRUGGED.
INTERROGATED.
RAN. THEY WANTED
INFORMATION ON
EARTH TARGETS.

TRIED
TO ESCAPE.
BEATEN. TORTURED.





"IT'S NO GOOD I STILL
CAN'T HEAR THEM "

"YES, YOU CAN LISTEN LISTEN."

123-

Yes, you can listen.

Listen, listen.

Yes, you can listen.

CAN'T BE, ISN'T POSSIBLE, HOW CAN—

VALEN SAID, WARNED JS—

DELENN, WE CAN'T JUST—

WE *MUST* CHECK AGAIN TO BE SURE, IF IT'S A MISTAKE—

AN ATROCITY, AN *OBSCENITY*. IF IT'S TRUE—

TEST HIM AGAIN...



IT IS TRUE THERE IS NO MISTAKE—

—HE HAS A MINBARI SOUL.



"... HE HAS A MINBARI SOUL "

... A MINBARI SOUL.

NO...

YES.

WE EXAMINED THE OTHER FIGHTER PILOTS WE CAPTURED AND INTERROGATED. COMMANDER THEY WERE THE SAME SOME TO A **LESSER** DEGREE. SOME WITH **MORE**. BUT ALL HAD MINBARI SOULS, OR PARTS OF MINBARI SOULS.

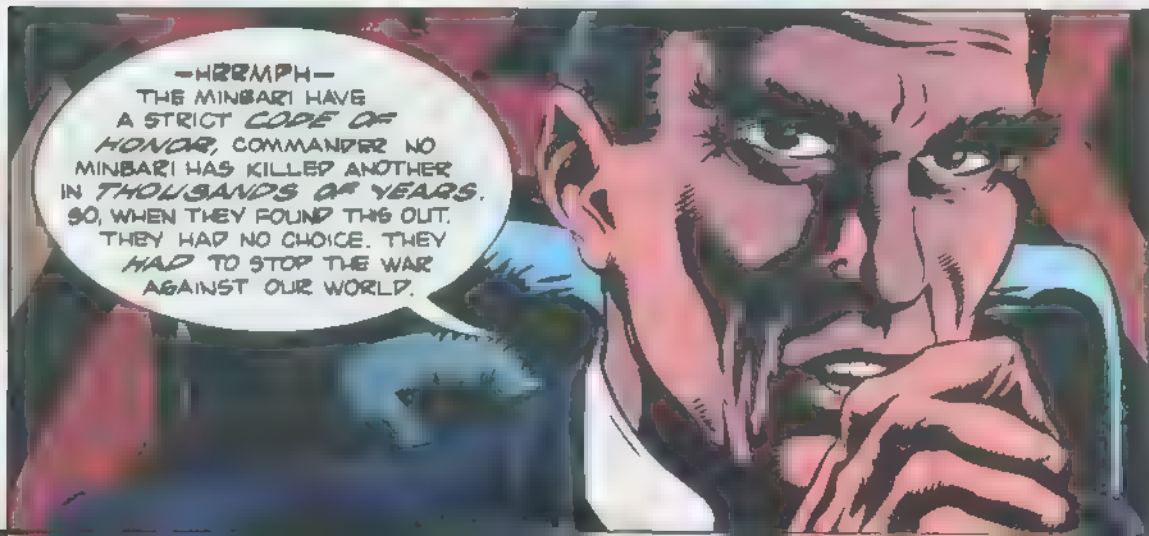
IN EACH GENERATION, THE SOULS OF OUR PEOPLE ARE REBORN **REMOVE** THOSE SOULS, AND THE WHOLE **BUFFERS**. WE ARE **DIMINISHED**. GRADUALLY, OVER NEARLY SIX THOUSAND YEARS, THE SOUL-WELL GREW SMALLER. OUR PEOPLE WERE BORN IN EVER **SMALLER NUMBERS**.

BECAUSE, YOU SEE, THERE SIMPLY WEREN'T ENOUGH SOULS TO GO AROUND FOR ALL OUR RACE.

WE'D THOUGHT THE **SOUL HUNTERS** RESPONSIBLE, BUT THEIR THEFTS FROM DYING MINBARI ACCOUNTED FOR ONLY A SMALL NUMBER OF MISSING SOULS. WE NEVER KNEW WHY OUR PEOPLE WERE DIMINISHED, **WHY** WE SUFFERED. .

WHY WE WERE DYING.

THAT DAY, WE DISCOVERED WHERE OUR MISSING SOULS HAD GONE. TO YOU. TO YOUR PEOPLE.



-HRRMPH-
THE MINBARI HAVE A STRICT CODE OF HONOR. COMMANDER NO MINBARI HAS KILLED ANOTHER IN **THOUSANDS OF YEARS**. SO, WHEN THEY FOUND THIS OUT, THEY HAD NO CHOICE. THEY **HAD** TO STOP THE WAR AGAINST OUR WORLD.

AND YOU *KNEW*? ALL
THIS TIME? YOU *KNEW*?

NO, COMMANDER
NOT UNTIL I ASSUMED
THIS OFFICE

OF COURSE, WE
MUSTN'T LET THIS
BECOME *COMMON*
KNOWLEDGE. PEOPLE
WOULDN'T... *REACT* WELL.
THE MINBARI WOULDN'T TAKE
IT MUCH *BETTER*. THEY'D
REFUSE TO ACCEPT IT
SOME *DID* REFUSE. I'M
TOLD ONE OF THEIR OWN
MILITARY LEADERS
REFUSED TO
BELIEVE..

KILLED
HIMSELF RATHER
THAN GIVE THE SUR-
RENDER ORDER

YOU WERE THE ONLY ONE WHO HEARD
OUR DELIBERATIONS THE ONLY ONE OUTSIDE THE
GREY COUNCIL WHO KNEW THE *TRUTH*.

BUT
TO KEEP
YOU A PRISONER
INDEFINITELY
WOULD BE
CRUEL

ONCE WE HAD
SUED FOR *PEACE*
AND TOLD YOUR GOV-
ERNMENT THE REASON
WHY...WE *MIND-*
WIPE YOU

WITH
YOUR GOVERNMENT'S
PERMISSION,
OF COURSE

SEVEN DAYS AGO . IS IT
ONLY SEVEN DAYS SINCE I
LEFT BABYLON 5 ? I TOLD
MY LOVELY CATHERINE,
*NOTHING'S THE
SAME ANYMORE.*

NOTHING'S THE SAME
ANYMORE NOTHING

MY GOD
MY GOD...

"OUR MINBARI FRIEND HAS
LEFT, COMMANDER .

FOR
NOW.

LOOK, I DON'T
BELIEVE THIS MINBARI
SOUL CRAP ANY MORE
THAN YOU DO. BUT
THEY BELIEVE IT.

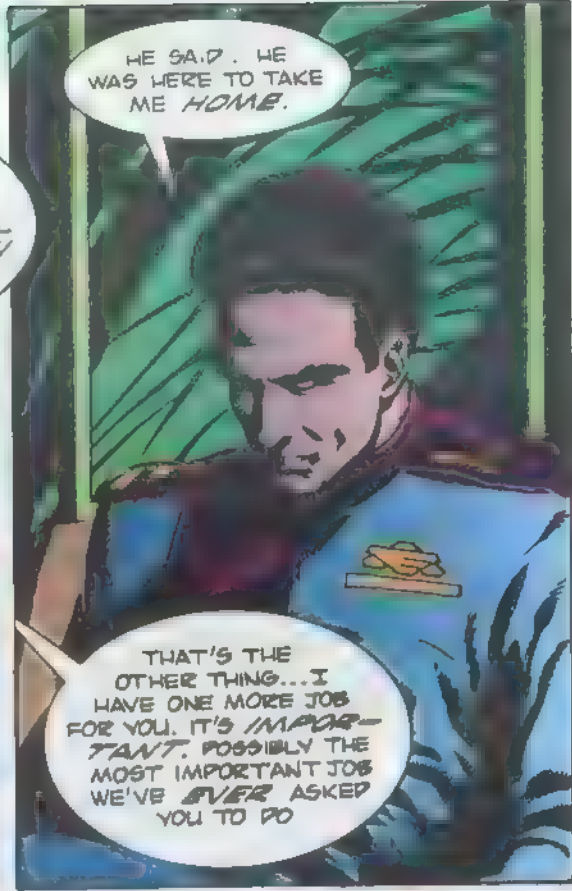
WE WERE DYING.
IT DIDN'T MATTER
THAT IT WAS INSANE .
EVERYTHING WAS IN-
SANE. IF IT MADE THEM STOP
KILLING US. . . WELL, THAT
WAS FINE BY US.

YOU
*UNDER-
STAND* THAT,
DON'T YOU ?



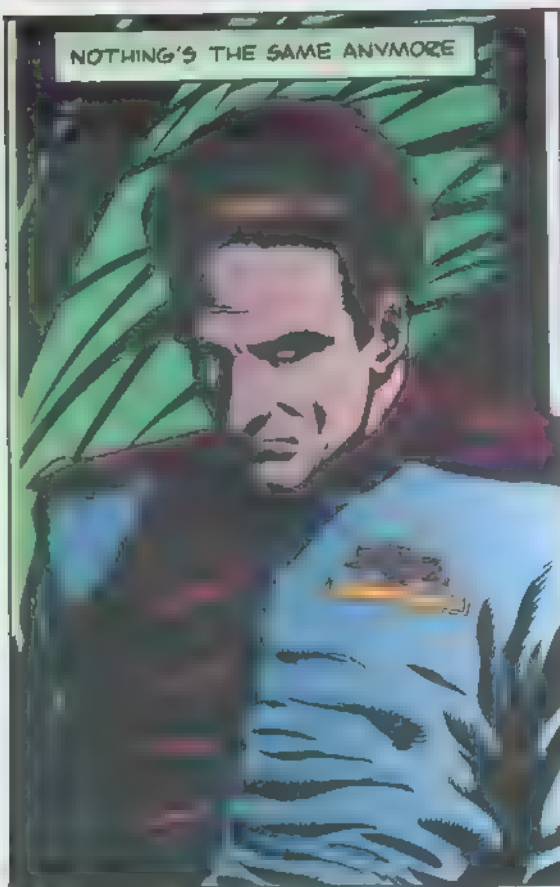
YEAH, WELL,
I DON'T *BLAME*
YOU GUESS I'D FEEL
THE SAME WAY, IN
YOUR SHOES.

IF YOU WANT TO
RESIGN YOUR COM-
MISSION, I'LL SEE TO IT.
FULL RETIREMENT PAY, FULL
HONORS, *ANYTHING YOU*
WANT. LORD KNOWS
YOU'VE EARNED IT

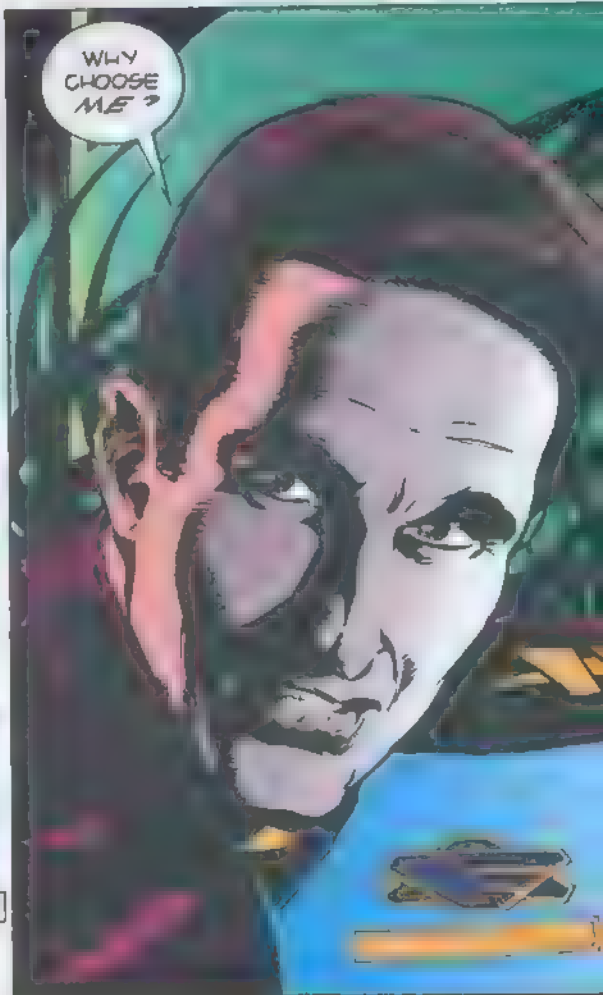


HE SAID. HE
WAS HERE TO TAKE
ME *HOME*.

THAT'S THE
OTHER THING...I
HAVE ONE MORE JOB
FOR YOU. IT'S *IMPOR-*
TANT. POSSIBLY THE
MOST IMPORTANT JOB
WE'VE *EVER* ASKED
YOU TO DO



NOTHING'S THE SAME ANYMORE



WHY
CHOOSE
ME?

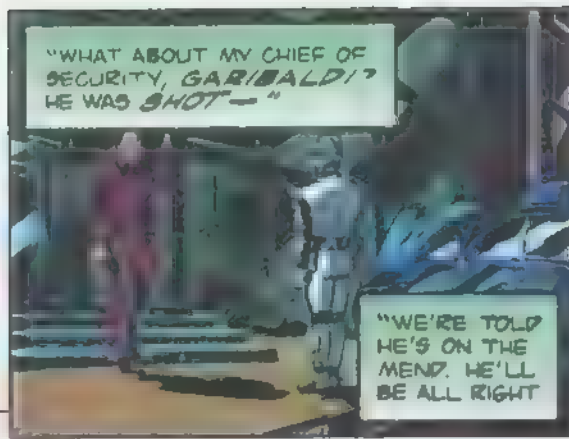
"BECAUSE YOU KNOW
MORE ABOUT THE
MINBAR, THAN ANYONE
ELSE COMMANDER "

"YOU'VE LIVED WITH
THEM—*WORKED*
WITH THEM— ON
BABYLON 5 YOU KNOW
HOW THEY *THINK* "

"NO ONE CAN DO THIS
AS WELL AS *YOU* CAN "

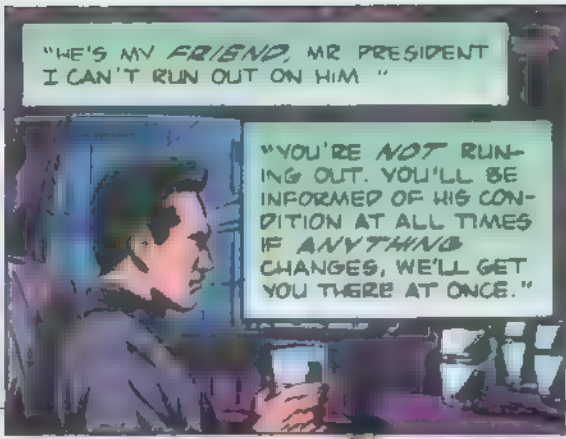
"YOUR WORLD *NEEDS* YOU JEFF "

NOTHING'S THE SAME ANYMORE



"WHAT ABOUT MY CHIEF OF SECURITY, GARIBALDI? HE WAS SHOT —"

"WE'RE TOLD HE'S ON THE MEND. HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT"



"HE'S MY *FRIEND*, MR. PRESIDENT I CAN'T RUN OUT ON HIM "

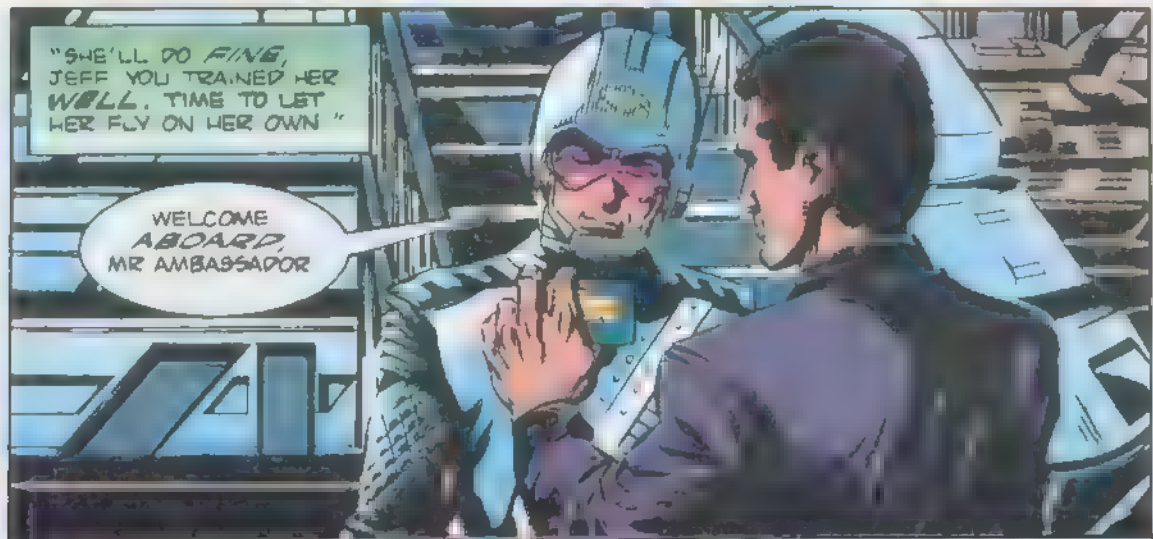
"YOU'RE *NOT* RUNNING OUT. YOU'LL BE INFORMED OF HIS CONDITION AT ALL TIMES IF *ANYTHING* CHANGES, WE'LL GET YOU THERE AT ONCE."



EARTH ALLIANCE SPACEPORT 022 —
EASTERN EUROPEAN SECTOR, GENEVA.

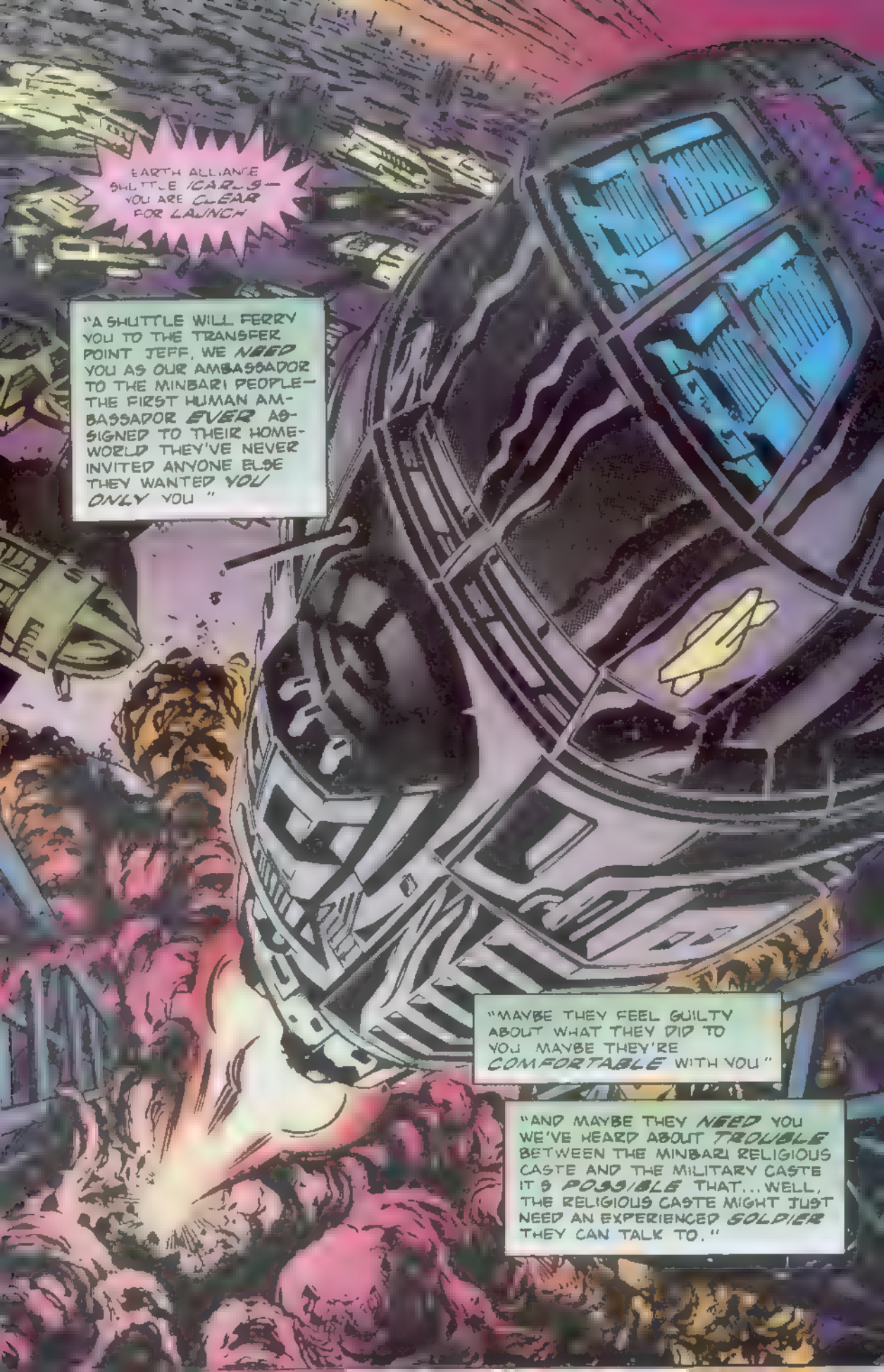
"WHAT ABOUT *IVANOVA*? AS MY *SECOND IN COMMAND*, SHE SHOULD *KNOW* —"

"*DONE* — I'LL NOTIFY HER MYSELF, FIRST THING IN THE MORNING. AND WE'RE ASSIGNING HER A NEW *CO.* CAPTAIN SHERIDAN. ALSO GIVING HER A *FIELD PROMOTION* — TO *COMMANDER*."



"SHE'LL DO *FINE*, JEFF. YOU TRAINED HER *WELL*. TIME TO LET HER FLY ON HER OWN"

WELCOME
ABOARD,
MR. AMBASSADOR



EARTH ALLIANCE
SHUTTLE ICARUS—
YOU ARE CLEAR
FOR LAUNCH

"A SHUTTLE WILL FERRY
YOU TO THE TRANSFER
POINT JEFF. WE *NEED*
YOU AS OUR AMBASSADOR
TO THE MINBARI PEOPLE—
THE FIRST HUMAN AM-
BASSADOR *EVER* AS-
SIGN TO THEIR HOME-
WORLD THEY'VE NEVER
INVITED ANYONE ELSE
THEY WANTED *YOU*
ONLY YOU "

"MAYBE THEY FEEL GUILTY
ABOUT WHAT THEY DID TO
YOU MAYBE THEY'RE
COMFORTABLE WITH YOU "

"AND MAYBE THEY *NEED* YOU
WE'VE HEARD ABOUT *TROUBLE*
BETWEEN THE MINBARI RELIGIOUS
CASTE AND THE MILITARY CASTE
IT'S *POSSIBLE* THAT... WELL,
THE RELIGIOUS CASTE MIGHT JUST
NEED AN EXPERIENCED *SOLDIER*
THEY CAN TALK TO."





WORDS... A *POEM*. BY SOMEONE WHO DIED A LONG TIME AGO. SOMEONE WHO BELIEVED IN HOPE FOR THE FUTURE, BUT ALSO KNEW THAT THE FUTURE IS ALWAYS *DIFFICULT*.



I'VE CARRIED IT WITH ME FOR *YEARS*. MEANS A LOT TO ME. I GUESS... IN THE END... *MAYBE IT MEANS EVERYTHING*.

I THOUGHT I'D READ IT TO THE COUNCIL. IT MIGHT HELP THEM *UNDERSTAND*.



"THOUGH WE ARE NOT
NOW THAT STRENGTH
WHICH IN OLD DAYS MOVED
EARTH AND HEAVEN, THAT
WHICH WE ARE, WE ARE.

"ONE EQUAL TEMPER OF
HEROIC HEARTS, MADE
WEAK BY TIME AND FATE,
BUT STRONG IN WILL.

"TO STRIVE, TO SEEK, TO
FIND, AND NOT TO YIELD."

-Tennyson, *LILYSSES*



B A B Y L O N

"It was the dawn of the third age of mankind... ten years after the Earth-Minbari war. The Babylon Project was a dream given form. Its goal: to prevent another war, by creating a place where humans and aliens could work out their differences peacefully. It's a port of call, home away from home, for diplomats, hustlers, entrepreneurs, and wanderers. Humans and aliens, wrapped in two million, five hundred thousand tons of spinning metal... all alone in the night. It can be a dangerous place, but it's our last, best hope for peace. This is the story of the last of the Babylon stations. The year is 2259. The name of the place is... **BABYLON 5.**"

FIRST SEASON LOG

Spinning slowly on the edge of known space, the Babylon 5 space station is a huge, carefully balanced machine, supporting delicate threads of life. Although species from all over the galaxy pass through it, the station was conceived and built by Humans, with support from four alien races: Centauri, Narn, Minbari, and Vorlon. These five are the diplomatic core of the Babylon project... neutral ground for the entire galaxy.

Aside from the laws of the station, however, little is clear on Babylon 5, and little has been easy during the station's first year. Even choosing a commander was troublesome — Earth Alliance proposed many candidates, but the Minbari refused to approve of any... until finally, the name of Jeffrey David Sinclair surfaced. Even with spotty leadership experience, he was the only commander the Minbari would accept.

Why? Reasons are unclear, although Sinclair does share a history with the Minbari — one he understands only imperfectly. Sinclair was one of few Earth Alliance members to survive the Battle of the Line, the final battle of the last major intergalactic war, pitting Humans against the Minbari. Shortly after they captured Sinclair in battle, however, the Minbari abruptly surrendered — even as they were scant moments from total victory.

Now Sinclair and his successor, Captain John Sheridan, must patch up relationships between interplanetary governments. The Narn and the Centauri have a long-standing feud, even more bitter now that the Narn have overthrown Centauri dominance — and begun their own aggressive expansion. The Grey Council, the mysterious ruling body of the Minbari, seems to encourage peace... but has trouble quelling dissent among the castes of its own people. Already, Ambassador Kosh of the Vorlon Empire has survived an assassination attempt, poisoned by a rogue Minbari killer who impersonated Sinclair. And the Vorkons are an enigma — few outsiders have ever seen one without its strange full-"body" environment suit. Other wild cards include members of Earth Alliance's telepathic Psi-Corps, and the mysterious Shadowmen...

Even the space station itself holds mysteries. Before Babylon 5, four previous stations were created — and lost. Three were mysteriously sabotaged and destroyed, and the fourth disappeared without a trace... only to reappear through a rift in time four years later, briefly, then wink out of existence again.

Now, there is only Babylon 5, one last station. One final chance for peace.

J. MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI

It's a whole new universe out there... if Joe Straczynski has anything to say about it.

For seven years, Straczynski has worked to bring a new vision of science-fiction stories to television. He traveled to science-fiction conventions around the country, talking about the state of current science-fiction, asking fans for opinions. And at every stop, he honed his concept of a new outer space environment, one that would appeal to people who truly loved science fiction — including himself.

The idea was immensely attractive to creative people, as well as fans. Harlan Ellison signed on as Conceptual Consultant. Ron Thornton and Steve Burg, special effects experts, agreed to design revolutionary new computer imagery for the show (see next page). As executive producer and creator, Straczynski also brought plenty of experience aboard: he's written several SF novels, plus over 120 television episodes for many animated and live-action television series, including CAPTAIN POWER, MURDER SHE WROTE and THE NEW TWILIGHT ZONE.

End result? **BABYLON 5**, the saga of a space station, where petty grievances and epic stories play out against a lush cultural background of aliens and humans.

According to Straczynski, the television series will follow a pre-planned five-year saga, building to a definitive end. So for Babylon 5, the future is known, although for the rest of us... surprises are waiting.

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NEXT UP: TREASON!

Jeffrey Sinclair arrives on Minbar, just in time to see a new Minbari leader sworn in... and a conspiracy plot unfold! Mark Moretti takes over as writer, basing his story on a premise by J. Michael Straczynski. Michael Netzer and Rob Leigh continue on art.

BEHIND THE SCENES

THE STARFURY AN OVERVIEW BY MOJO AND RON THORNTON

Although Babylon 5 is primarily a fixture of peace, it must be prepared to handle violence at many levels. Having a high-profile position on the political map often makes it a target for terrorists and even entire races who sometimes reject its decisions. As a result, this galactic white dove has sharp teeth to help it enforce its diplomatic policy and defend against enemies.

In addition to a comprehensive defensive grid of energy weapons and missile interceptors, the station often uses the STARFURY. This high performance space combat/reconnaissance fighter is state of the art Earth technology and is a formidable opponent to all but the most advanced races.

It was designed by Ron Thornton and Steve Burg (who together conceptualized hardware for films such as *The Abyss* and *Terminator 2*) as a real zero-gravity combat vehicle. It features four vectoring thrust nozzles/propulsion units on the tip of each wing. This places the thrust line far from the center of mass, allowing maximum maneuverability with a minimum of power (similar to engines on the McDonnell-Douglas AV-8 Harrier, as seen in *True Lies*). These units are modular and easily removable, facilitating maintenance and keeping STARFURY downtime to a minimum.

Space-suited pilots stand in their cockpits to help them withstand the high g-forces associated with the breakneck maneuvering possible in a zero-gravity environment. By remaining perpendicular to the direction of acceleration, blood will not rush from the pilot's brain as fast, helping to prevent blackout in a sudden high-g turn. This principle is employed today when astronauts lie down during a launch.

The STARFURY is armed with Copeland-JC466/A pulse discharge cannons, located directly below the cockpit on either side. Secondary cannons rest in the same position above the cockpit. They pack a wallop and rarely miss when combined with the on-board Duffy-1018MJS smart targeting computer.

In an emergency, the entire cockpit can eject from the fighter and serve as a temporary lifeboat. Similar to the General Dynamics F1-11, the cockpit separates with an explosive discharge to carry the pilot quickly away from highly volatile fuel and armaments stores.

Fuel is stored in the wings of the STARFURY and, although plentiful, burns up quickly under the constant thrust required to engage in combat. Since many alien craft do not suffer this limitation, STARFURY pilots have no choice but to be the best, eliminating their targets swiftly and efficiently.

The STARFURY isn't the prettiest ship in the Babylon 5 universe, but what it lacks in beauty it makes up for with brawn. The Earth Alliance pilots put it best with their motto: Ugly But Well Hung.

HOW TO MAKE A STARFURY

BABYLON 5 has made visual effects history as the first TV program to produce its effects entirely

by computer. The process begins by creating a digital 'model' of a ship, such as a Starfury. Like a high-tech version of connect-the-dots, lines are connected by vectors in 3-dimensional space to create polygons, simple geometric shapes that are the building blocks of 3D animation.

By assembling thousands of polygons in the shape of a Starfury, the artist provides the computer with a mathematical description of the model. This allows it to figure out what a Starfury would look like from every angle.

In a paint program, colors, dirt, insignias and other small details are painted in the shape of the model. These images, called Texture Maps, are saved and applied to the computer models.

Once the model is finished, it is brought into the computer's virtual soundstage where it must be placed in front of digital cameras and lights. Using a mouse, the animator moves the model, camera and lights to show the computer what is desired.

The computer now figures out and 'renders' the sequence frame by frame. In a complex scene, one frame can take over an hour. There are 30 frames per second, so each second of special effects takes the computer more than 30 hours to generate!

Foundation Imaging currently employs a room full of Commodore Amiga computers with the NewTek Video Toaster to get the effects finished on time every week. As computers get faster, rendering will become less of a problem and you may yet see even more exciting special effects in future episodes of *BABYLON 5*!



This is the model's geometry as seen by the computer. Each little square is a flat segment called a polygon. Combined, these polygons create smooth surfaces.



An initial rendering of the finished STARFURY looks like an unpainted plastic model kit. The shape is perfect, yet it is still only half complete.



The finished, painted version. Texture maps created in a computer paint program provide important finishing touches, turning it into a realistic space fighter.

RON THORNTON is the Visual Effects Director at Foundation Imaging, which creates the computer-generated special effects for *BABYLON 5*.

MOJO is a Visual Effects Artist/Technical Director at Foundation Imaging and sometimes writes about *BABYLON 5* for no apparent reason.